

***Heritage Commission
Monthly Meeting
September 7, 2006***

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, NH on Thursday, September 7, 2006 at 4:30 pm.

Present at the meeting were James McConaha, Chairperson; Philip Donovan, Vice-Chairperson; Carol Durgy Brooks, Frederick Richards, Robert Johnson, Marilyn Fraser and alternate members Elizabeth Durfee Hengen and Stephen Shurtleff. City Planner Douglas Woodward and Administrative Specialist II Denise Taschereau were also present.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson McConaha at 4:40 pm.

1. The Commission considered the minutes of August 3, 2006. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Shurtleff and seconded by Mr. Donovan. Motion passed.
2. The Commission considered the minutes of August 21, 2006. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Fraser and seconded by Ms. Brooks. Motion passed.
3. Chairperson McConaha stated that in order to vote on the application in front of the commission, that a member needed to have been present at the special meeting held on August 21, 2006. Mr. Johnson stated that since he hadn't been present, he would refrain. Ms. Fraser also indicated that she would not participate in any vote on this matter. Chairperson McConaha, Ms. Brooks, Mr. Shurtleff, Mr. Donovan, Ms. Hengen, and Mr. Richard had all been present on August 21, 2006, and therefore could vote on this application. Ms. Hengen asked if the alternates needed to be elevated to voting status. Chairperson McConaha responded that the alternate members who had been seated at the August 21, 2006 meeting remained eligible to vote on this matter.
4. There was lengthy discussion among Commission members if a new public hearing needed to be scheduled, since the applicant has made changes to the plan. Ms. Brooks stated that the public has not seen the changes. Mr. Richards commented that the new design is closer to what the public stated that they wanted during the public hearing held on August 21, 2006. Chairperson McConaha asked Mr. Woodward for some input regarding this situation. Mr. Woodward responded that in his experience with the Planning Board, each situation is different. It also depends on the nature of the proposed changes. Mr. James Merrill, the applicant's attorney, stated that based on the discussion at the public hearing held on August 21, 2006, his client has made changes to the plan. The applicant is a non-profit organization and delaying the approval process will have a negative impact on the budget for the organization. He also stated that the applicant still needs to go back to the Planning Board for their approval. Chairperson McConaha stated that no Commission members have reviewed the revised plans. He suggested that the applicant review the changes for the Commission, and then the Commission would make a decision whether to hold another public hearing or to vote on the matter this evening.

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5. Mr. Carley explained that from the input received from the public hearing, there were four issues that the Commission and the public were concerned with. The roofline; the exterior stairway railings; replacement windows; and the pavers. The applicant made change to the stairway so that it will now be located inside the barn, and no addition will be needed. Mr. Carley stated that they were able to change the design by moving the office space to the second floor of the barn. He noted that the door at the rear of the Manse that originally was to be permanently closed will now be used as an emergency exit. Mr. Carley then explained the materials and design of the railings, the windows and the pavers. To address Fire Department concerns, sprinklers will be installed in the ell and in the renovated barn, but not in the Manse itself.

6. The Commission then discussed at length whether the changes made to the plan warranted a new public hearing. Ms. Brooks felt that the public should be able to review the changes and comment on them. Mr. Richards said that the public comments were negative about the stairway addition. Now the stairway addition is gone and the rest of the plan is basically the same. He also stated that he felt that the applicant has been very responsive regarding the additional information that the committee has asked for. Mr. Shurtleff said that he felt that the public should be able to see the new plan and provide comments thereon to the Commission. He said that if the Commission had asked to see a new plan with the stairs removed, that would be one thing. He prefers this plan, but the public still didn't get a chance to see it. Mr. Shurtleff suggested that the Commission recess this meeting for two weeks, provide notice of a public hearing at the recessed meeting, and then vote after the hearing. Chairperson McConaha asked if this was a motion and Mr. Shurtleff indicated it was. Ms. Brooks seconded the motion. The motion failed on a vote of 2 to 3 with Mr. Shurtleff and Ms. Brooks voting in favor, and Mr. Richard, Mr. Donovan, and Ms. Hengen voting against. Commission members then continued to question Mr. Carley regarding the type of windows, the material of the railings, the details of door hinges, and the changes in the roofline of the ell. Mr. Donovan asked how the runoff from the roof would be handled at the new entrance. Mr. Carley responded that a gutter would be installed.

7. Chairperson McConaha opened the deliberation portion of the meeting. Ms. Hengen suggested that the Commission go through the application narrative and list of changes, dated July 11, 2006, and note what the Commission finds acceptable.

Under "changes and additions to the Manse", the Commission made the following clarifications and modifications: glazing shall be clear glass; the rear emergency door shall match the front door in terms of design; the railings for the steps to the emergency door shall be wrought iron railings; the brick walkway shall match the existing brick walkway to the extent possible.

Under "changes to the ell", the Commission made the following clarifications and modifications: the proposed sidelights to the entrance door shall be removed; the glass inner door shall be single glazing; the railings shall be of wrought iron.

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Under “changes to the barn”, the Commission made the following clarifications and modifications: on the west, south, and east facades, which are visible to the public, the windows shall be single glazed with interior insulating sash; on the north elevation, insulating glass windows with 2 over 2 divided lights are acceptable; the new doors shall match the barn doors with strap hinges.

The “proposed additions” was deleted and withdrawn by the applicant.

Under “proposed changes to the site”, the Commission made the following clarifications and modifications: the existing granite flush curbs at the end of the existing brick walkway shall remain.

After reviewing the narrative and list of changes, as well as making the above-referenced clarifications and modifications, Chairperson McConaha asked if any Commission member wanted to make a motion on whether the proposed changes to the Pierce Manse and barn are acceptable. Mr. Shurtleff made a motion that the proposed changes to the Pierce Manse and barn, as modified by the Heritage Commission, are compatible with the Historic District Guidelines. Ms. Hengen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Richards then made a motion to approve the application with the above-noted revisions to the list of changes dated July 11, 2006 as conditions of said approval. Mr. Donovan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Brooks noted that any future applications will be required to include in the submittal complete plans with details on materials such as windows, pavers, etc.

8. Chairperson McConaha stated that there was a meeting held by the City Council and Planning Board on August 23, 2006 regarding the proposed State of NH Parking Garage for the Legislature in the downtown area. Several members of the Commission attended and Mr. Donovan participated on behalf of the Commission. There was discussion at the meeting regarding the historical value of the area. City Council will provide a response to the State by October 16, 2006.
9. There was some discussion regarding the Abbott Village project at 382 North State Street. There was concern that the granite fence posts along North State Street were no longer there. The retention of the granite posts was a condition of Planning Board Approval.
10. A motion was made at 6:50 PM by Mr. Richards to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Chairperson McConaha. The motion passed unanimously.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Denise Taschereau
Administrative Specialist II
Community Development Department